various provisions of the Act. The State Governments are advised from time to time to strictly enforce the provisions of the labour laws. With regard to the average wages of beedi workers, both male and female, the minimum wages vary in different States between Rs. 38.80 and Rs. 132.50 for rolling one thousand beedis as fixed by the State Governments under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

Jobs in industrial sector

5342. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Industrial Sector shed more than 7 lakh jobs in two years ending 2000; and

(b) if so, the measures proposed to ensure that industry generates enough jobs for employees in the factory sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) The employment in the organized industrial sector reduced by approximately 2 lakh in the two years ending 2000.

(b) the growth strategy of the Tenth Plan lays emphasis on rapid growth of sectors, which are most likely to create high quality employment opportunities. In order to enable the poor to access the opportunities and to ensure consistency between the requirement and availability of skills, emphasis is being placed on skill development.

Skill Development Fund

5343. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Skill Development Fund has been created to prepare work-force in the wake of industrial restructuring;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether there is a proposal to do so and by when;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.